

25X1A

NRO DECLASSIFICATION/RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS ON FILE

SUBJECT

- DISCUSSION OF FUTURE OF IDEALIST PROGRAM ON
13 NOVEMBER 1968 AT EXCOM

1. We have many Indicators that the BOB will attempt to scuttle the IDEALIST Program during the November ExCom meeting. This briefing has been prepared to apprise you of this fear and to prepare the CIA spokesmen for rebuttal, if the need arises. Attendant with this briefing is a memorandum stating the facts and a Black Book which contains factual data such as missions flown, yearly costs, etc.

2. Your suggestions as to modifications, changes, omissions, etc., of the briefing book and memorandum of this type to be presented to Mr. Helms is solicited. If your decision is to present this to Mr. Helms, then the urgency of the situation must be stressed as the ExCom is scheduled to meet on 13 November 1968.

INDICATORS

- BOB - COMMENTS
- DOD - PREPARATIONS
- NRO - COMMENTS
- NRO - REQUESTS
- CIA - NOTES
- CIA - STUDY

INDICATORS

BOB Comments:

For the past two years the BOB has mentioned at various hearings that they intend to discuss the future of the IDEALIST Program. Mr. Fisher also suggested, in very strong terms to Doctor Flax, that prior to the FY 69 budget approval he halt the IDEALIST activity pending a study (or words to this effect). Doctor Flax was strong in his reply that the ExCom had authorized the Program and he would continue to operate it.

DOD Preparation:

Mr. Nitze has requested the Secretary of the Air Force, JCS, DDR&E, etc., to prepare a paper by 1 November giving the assesment of the DOD Reconnaissance activity and related ExCom matters including alternatives to the drone, U-2, SR-71 and the impact of such alternatives. This is obviously a preparation for discussion of the DOD posture and ExCom consideration of reconnaissance activities at the ExCom November meeting. Also to be noted are the comments by the DDCI and Mr. Duckett that we should not plan any direct participation in the DOD study but it does not preclude our preparing to counter any suggested demise of the IDEALIST nor does it preclude our preparation of statistics and policy involved in continuing the IDEALIST Program.

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INDICATORS
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NRO Comments:

[REDACTED] in a discussion with [REDACTED] requested that we generate a paper defending the Program and giving reasons for continuing the Program as it could possibly be presented at the ExCom in November.

NRO Requests:

[REDACTED] has requested background information as to missions flown, reasons for standdown and pertinent information that pertains to the issue. Similar information has been requested for [REDACTED] and it is obvious that the BOB is attempting to develop an issue whereby the IDEALIST Program would be deleted or curtailed.

BOB Requests:

The BOB has requested certain background information and supplemental data for the IDEALIST [REDACTED] Programs from the NRO. We have responded to this by answering only the direct question asked as to missions and reasons for standdowns.

CIA Notes:

Mr. Bross requested Mr. Duckett to prepare a memorandum stating the case in favor of active continued participation by CIA in the design, development, utilization and

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CIA Notes (Cont'd):

control of technical collection systems. This, of course, included the IDEALIST. It suggested a general survey which would envision proposals for organizational changes if required. The reply was prepared by OSA and forwarded to DDS&T in early October.

CIA Study:

In reality there is no formal study by OSA, but it is endeavoring to pinpoint the pros and cons of continuation of the IDEALIST Program. These are included in the background book and in the ensuing pages.

PROBABLE BOB COMMENTS

PROPOSAL TO MAKE COMPARATIVE STUDY TO INCLUDE:

- OPERATIONAL HOURS
- NUMBER OF MISSIONS
- COST FACTOR

Per Hour

Per Mission

Per Photo Coverage

Per Base

- NOT REALLY COVERT

BOB COMMENTS

25X1A The most likely introductory phrase by the BOB at the ExCom will be a proposal to make a comparative study of the IDEALIST, [REDACTED] and other similar reconnaissance programs to determine if they could be integrated, dissolved, or to prove that their cost effectiveness was basically nil. Items that they would suggest be included would be operational hours, numbers of missions flown vs aircraft assigned; cost factors to include comparisons per flying hour, per mission, per foot of photo coverage, per unit or base, etc. They might also state that the IDEALIST is not really a covert program and will suggest that our overflights are not covert, but they will shy off completely from the discussion of the military vs civilian aspect of the mission. It is obvious that the BOB would like this to be the beginning of the demise of the IDEALIST in the same manner as the OXCART Program. In fact, this should be the time that a counter attack is made by the CIA spokesmen as is outlined in ensuing pages, and if necessary, the statement should be made that a study would be wasteful in time and money and that if the committee does not believe that the country needs this program, then it should be cut immediately.

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BOB COMMENTS

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2. Another attack that was used in the OXCART Program was that the Program was not really covert since you use Air Force officers, military transport, and equipment, military bases etc. This of course is ridiculous and does not have any bearing on the point that the overflight is covert and not the base from whence it comes.

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SUGGESTED CIA POSTURE

- AVOID \$ DUSCUSSIONS
- IGNORE FLYING HOUR AND MISSION COMPARISONS
- STRESS THE FOLLOWING IF NEED ARISES:
 - Covert Authority
 - Established Organization
 - Complementary Vs Competitive
 - Presidential Choice of Weapons
- DO NOT AGREE TO BOB/DOD/CIA STUDY

SUGGESTED CIA POSTURE

NRO
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1. Since dollars are not germane to the subject, although BOB will claim that the dollars per mission etc. are, it would be foolish to enter into a discussion with [REDACTED] or the BOB as to actual costs per mission, per hour, etc. The parameters they use are not known to us and are not inclusive of items such as "blue suit" maintenance cost, base support, housing, retirement of military, fuel, etc.

2. A discussion of flying hours and missions as compared to the SAC unit would be fruitless and a loss before it was started since SAC logs their operational mission and operational hours from a different set of ground rules. Any time a SAC airplane is ordered by higher headquarters to fly it is considered an operational mission, i.e., to fly to Omaha and take pictures of the flooded river would be considered an operational mission. Further, they have the responsibility for South East Asia and Cuba so a comparison would put us in a very bad light. In the past we have been content to state that we only log overflight missions as operational missions and then drop the subject.

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SUGGESTED CIA POSTURE
Cont'd

3. The beginning of the end of the OXCART was a study of which several participants presupposed at the beginning that the systems were similar and therefore two systems were not required. The dollars picture was distorted and gave a false picture. It is strongly urged that if the ExCom suggests a study be made, that the CIA spokesmen at this time counter by suggesting that if they were not convinced that there is a real need for this Program, then it should be stopped immediately without a slow, costly disintegration.

4. The points to be stressed are covered separately in the following charts.

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ESTABLISHED WORLD WIDE ORGANIZATION

- INTER AGENCY RAPPORT
- SYSTEM/SENSOR DEVELOPMENT
- QUICK REACTION CAPABILITY

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COMPLEMENTARY VS COMPETITIVE

- AGENCY - DOD
- MUTUAL SUPPORT FOR
 - Procurement
 - Development
 - Training
 - Operations

COMPLEMENTARY VS COMPETITIVE

The Agency and DOD U-2 Programs are complementary and not competitive. There is mutual procurement, development, training and support for operations throughout the activities. Both units benefit from the Agencies capability for quick reaction, development, training facilities, etc. The point being that there is no contest or duel to see who can do the better job but in reality, they are supporting one another throughout the Program parameters.

PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE OF WEAPONS

- OVERT VS COVERT
- CIVILIAN VS MILITARY

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PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Of great significance is the fact that the President in time of crisis can choose either his military arm or clandestine arm and it is felt that this choice should remain.

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RECOMENDATION

A STRONG POSITION BE TAKEN FOR CONTINUATION OF
THE IDEALIST PROGRAM

PREVENT PROGRAM EMASCULATION BY ATTRITION OF
AIRCRAFT

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RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that if the DOD or BOB raises the issue at the November ExCom, then the CIA spokesmen should be well versed in the reasons for continuation of the IDEALIST Program. It is further suggested that the CIA spokesmen prevent emasculation or dwindling of the IDEALIST assets so as to make meaningless the contributions to the national reconnaissance effort in the near future. Items such as continuous studies, limitations of aircraft, loss of dollars, and denial of new equipment should be guarded against. In the final analysis, it is suggested that a "use it or lose it" attitude be taken by CIA and if necessary, be transmitted to the ExCom members.

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